



Weekly Message from the Tribal Chairman

April 8, 2005

Dear Tribal Members and Employees:

I wanted to thank the many employees who wrote and expressed their appreciation for my first Weekly Message. I am sorry I couldn't get back to all of you individually, but your encouragement only proves that open communication goes along way. Here is an update from this past week:

Visit to Menominee Tribal School:

Last Thursday I visited the Menominee Tribal School – where I was able to have lunch with Dr. Powless, teachers and students. It was nice to be able to get out in the community and to see tribal employees in their work environments. I was really impressed with the salad bar that the students can choose at lunch. With such high rates of diabetes in our tribe it is encouraging that healthy eating habits are being taught among our youth. The kitchen staff should be commended for their efforts.

I think it is important support those institutions who support our children. In the coming weeks and months I hope to revisit the school and also spend time with other programs and institutions which take care of our youth.

Kenosha BIA Scoping Report Released:

Last week the Bureau of Indian Affairs released their "Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Report," it addresses the Tribe's proposed Kenosha entertainment center and casino. This report serves as a blueprint as they assess in detail the environmental implications of our proposed development. For more information on our Kenosha plans and to download this report, go to our website www.kenoshacasino.com.

Interview with Forbes Magazine:

Last Friday I did an interview with Forbes Magazine, for they're doing a profile on the Mohegan Tribe's economic development initiatives. Obviously, the interview focused on our partnership with the Mohegan and how they're both an investor in the Kenosha Project and how we also chose them to be our Management Company. They anticipate publishing their article probably in early May.

Field Museum Visit: Menominee Stands Proud:

Last weekend I was in Chicago and visited the Field Museum and found it refreshing that Menominee beadwork and craftsmanship was being displayed under the same roof as an exhibit entitled "Jacqueline Kennedy: White House Years Selection from the John F. Kennedy Library and Museum." The message of this poetic irony is that style knows no bounds and that our ancestors' work can and should be displayed in some of this country's great museums! We should all be proud!

Visit with BIA Minneapolis Regional Office:

I traveled to Minneapolis to make a presentation to Nancy Pierskalla the new Regional Gaming Specialist this Tuesday to update her on plans regarding Kenosha. I was accompanied by Leo Chapulaska, from Mohegan Sun, Rory Dilweg, our attorney with Holland and Knight, and our in-house counsel John Wilhelmi. The intent of the meeting was to bring Nancy up-to-date on our progress and plans surrounding Kenosha.

While we were at the Regional Office, Mr. Wilhelmi and I met with Regional Director Terry Virden on forestry issues and I personally delivered the "draft" harvest schedule and backlog plan that the Legislature took action on on Monday. The latter needs their approval before any prescriptions are approved, which then allows our loggers to go back to work later this month. After the initial 03/26 General Council meeting on forestry issues the Legislature pledged to work with the BIA and MTE on behalf of the loggers to ensure that the prescriptions would be approved and that the MTE April 20th letting of bids could be honored.

Mr. Virden assured us that they will review our schedule and plan in an expeditious manner and that the BIA does not want to stand in the way of Menominee loggers making a living. He pledged their full cooperation and technical expertise. Tied to this is a BIA letter issued to the tribe regarding our PL-638 Forestry Contract performance, for this letter cited several areas of non-compliance. Mr. Virden, along with our contracting officer Stuart Mani, confirmed that they would travel to Menominee and meet with the Legislature and MTE on Friday, April 22nd to discuss our proposed Corrective Action Plan relating to concerns raised in this initial letter. Our plan was due to the BIA on April 18th, though they extended that deadline until May 1st. Legislator Reiter has worked with MTE on developing a response to many of the BIA concerns, and we will be forwarding that response to them prior to their visit to the reservation, so that we can focus on resolving these concerns when they are here at the end of the month.

On a related issue, the tribe has been pressing the Regional Director to release a recently issued Solicitor's Opinion regarding the Department of Interior's role over the trust management of the Menominee forest. Again, Mr. Virdin relayed that the Central Office was uncomfortable releasing the opinion and that the Tribe has decided we would file our own Freedom-of-Information-Act request seeking its determination/opinion.

Alcohol and Drug Awareness:

The Legislature at their 04/07 Regular Meeting passed a resolution declaring the week of April 18th as Alcohol and /or Drug Awareness Week.

Maehnowesekiyah efforts in this regard deserve special recognition, for they have some very motivated staff who are dedicated to positive change around substance abuse issues. Their reward is helping others achieve sobriety and healthier lives and they do not seek personal recognition although they deserve it.

Sturgeon Feast:

Also, at last night's meeting the Legislature passed a resolution in recognition of Ingrid Washinawatok, who will be honored at this year's Sturgeon Feast and pow wow on Saturday, April 16th at the Menominee Indian High School. There will be two Grand Entries, one at 1:00 p.m. and the second at 7:00 p.m. I encourage everyone to attend, it is fitting that we honor Ingrid for the sacrifices she made on behalf of Indigenous People in the United States and abroad. For more information on this event, contact the Historic Preservation Office at 799-5258.

Community Representation of Tribal Legislative Committees:

I wanted to thank all the community members who applied to serve on the various committees. The Legislature took action and appointed the following individuals to committees: Jamie Loudbear Wayka to Budget and Finance; David Hawpetoss to Community Development; Trilby Beauprey McIntosh to Enforcement and Resource Protection; Marci Hawpetoss to Governmental Affairs; Betty Gray to Health and Family; Lloyd Pecore to Housing; David Wynos to Labor, Education and Training; and Roger Waukau, Sr. to the Forest Management Plan Task Force. These individuals represent the community's interests on these various committees and will serve until the next Legislature is seated.

In closing:

This week we are trying to reach beyond just the tribal office E-mail list and share this Weekly Message with other programs, agencies and operations. If you missed the message from last week, it will be posted on the tribe's website www.menominee.nsn on Monday.

Again, thank you and have a great weekend.

Sincerely,

Michael Chapman
Chairman
Menominee Tribal Legislature